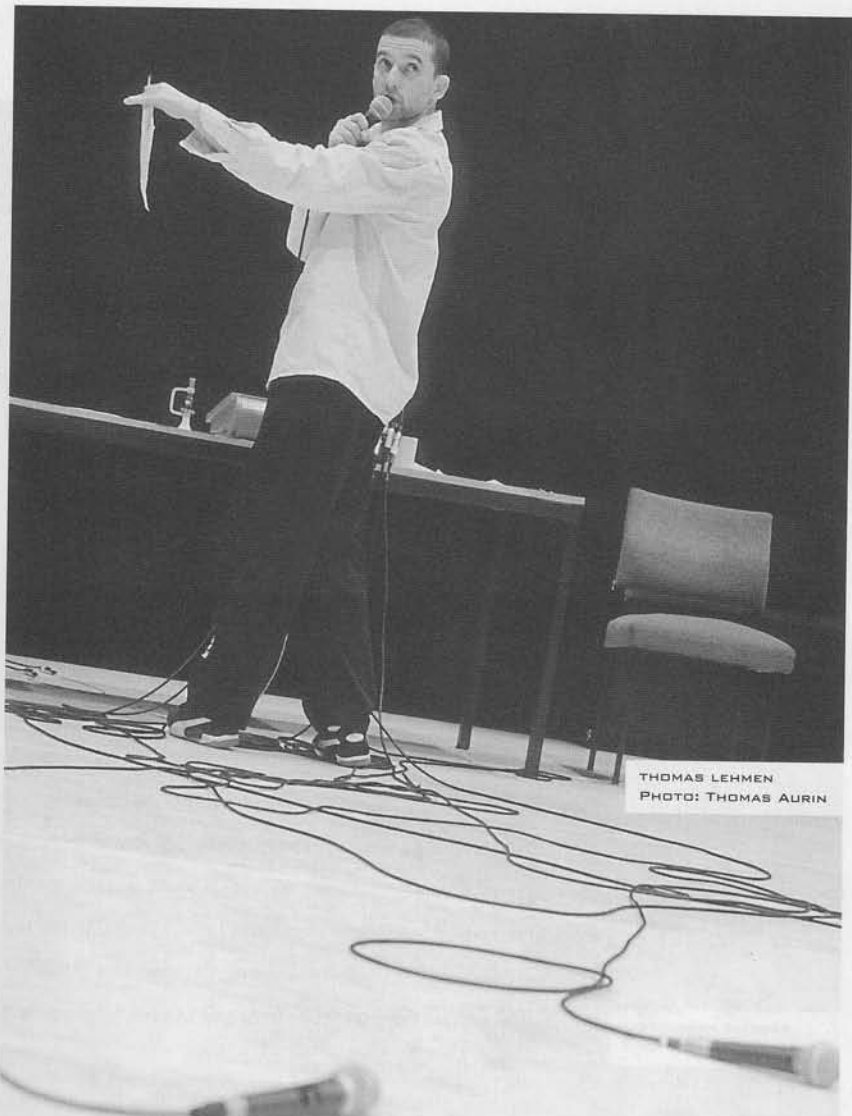


THOMAS LEHMEN
'DISTANZLOS'

There isn't a single solo in which he hasn't told a story of the "Ruhrpott" – his home, which just a few years ago was the very epitome of working-class solidarity. Nowadays, it's more an amusement park than a nest of chummy proletarianism, and Thomas Lehmen, on the border between performance and dance, imbues it with an identity that stands for the region, and which is now made manifest on the body. Movement in the proletarian sense is bound to function or combat. Performance – shifting around stacks of sand, walling up a space – makes reference to an old concept of work that, in dance, has been sublimated for ages. There is nothing against which Thomas Lehmen can direct the energies of the body, nothing that the body can "tackle." His dance tells of an actionism that was an aggressive overexertion back in the '60s. Today, this body is a service industry: for the production process, it is unusable. It is merely the refuge of memory and narrative.

21 | 22 JANUARY 2000



THOMAS LEHMEN
PHOTO: THOMAS AURIN

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... The trick is not to subjugate the movement to any style-oriented logic. Also, not to cling to your own clichéd images and just confirm them constantly to yourself, but rather continually to reshape the parameters anew from each new perspective of a completed movement. Then it won't be hard to find an opportunity where you can show it all.

structures, together with the attendant stereotypical cast of characters and appropriate soundtrack, which he uses to make manifest the extent to which our reality is permeated with prefabricated visual and auditory patterns.

This unanchored condition, which drives the subject out on the open seas of images and sounds, engenders fear. When the boundary between the symbolic and the imaginary, between the commonly-shared reality and its ideal images, collapses, the subject disintegrates into states of paranoia. In 'No Fear,' Thomas Lehmen shows the fear in the face of a self whose identity is forfeit, whose reconstruction of itself as something living is now only possible at the extremity of sensation. The craving for adrenaline and the ultimate kick, which only barely avoids injuries, is thematised by Anouk van Dyk and Falk Richter in 'Nothing Hurts.'

